

Message Text

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50/43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 AID-05 SR-02 ORM-01 SY-05

(ISO) W

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O 311320Z MAR 75 ZFF4

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9057

AMEMBASSY SAIGON NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

JCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

USDAO SAIGON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 05141

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TAGS AND SUBJ ADDED)

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMER PINT VS GW

SUBJECT: EVACUATION OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES

REF: A. HONG KONG 3331 (NOTAL) B. BONN 5139

BEGIN SUMMARY. FRG IS CONTINUING PREPARATIONS TO ASSIST
IN EMERGENCY EVACUATION OPERATIONS BUT HAS ASKED USG TO
PROVIDE URGENT INFORMATION FOR RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS FROM
OWNERS OF TWO COMMERCIAL VESSELS BEING DIVERTED TO SOUTH
VIETNAM. ACTION REQUESTED: PROMPT GUIDANCE FOR HANDLING
QUESTIONS LISTED BELOW CONCERNING SECURITY ON BOARD,
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SUPPLIES, AND OVERALL DIRECTION OF OPERATION. END

SUMMARY.

1. FRG FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED US THAT, AS REPORTED REFA, HAPAG-LLOYD LINE (A PRIVATE COMPANY) HAS AGREED TO DIVERT COURSE OF TWO SHIPS PRESENTLY IN AREA; THEY ARE BEING ORDERED TO CAM RANH TO STAND BY FOR EVACUATION ACTION. MS RHEINLAND WILL REACH CAM RANH MARCH 31 OR APRIL 1, AND MS VOGTLAND SHOULD ARRIVE APRIL 3. EACH SHIP HAS CREW OF 35 MEN PLUS 3 WOMEN; ESTIMATED EVACUATION CAPACITY IS 1000 PERSONS EACH. RHEINLAND HAS FUEL FOR 20 DAYS, VOGTLAND FOR 10 DAYS. EACH SHIP HAS ONLY ENOUGH DRINKING WATER FOR CREW FOR 12 DAYS; FONMIN ASSUMPTION IS THAT SHIPS DO NOT HAVE DESALINATION CAPABILITY.

2. FONMIN HAS GIVEN EMBASSY A 'NON-PAPER' CONTAINING FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, WHICH PAPER STATES MUST BE CLARIFIED BEFORE THE SHIPS REACH VIETNAMESE TERRITORIAL WATERS:

- A. WHAT IS THE PROBABLE DURATION OF THE ACTION?
(PAPER NOTES THAT, AS THESE ARE CONTAINER SHIPS ON REGULAR SERVICE, THEY CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE ONLY FOR LIMITED TIME.)
- B. WHO WILL DIRECT THE ACTION (NAME, POSITION, MEANS OF RADIO COMMUNICATION) AND WHO WILL DECIDE WHERE REFUGEES ARE TO BE BOARDED AND WHERE LANDED?
- C. WHO WILL PROVIDE SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR MAINTAINING ORDER ON BOARD? (FONMIN STRESSES THIS A KEY QUESTION, GIVEN TV COVERAGE OF EVACUATION EFFORTS TO DATE AND FACT THAT THERE ARE NO WEAPONS ON BOARD AND ONLY ENOUGH CREW FOR ACTUAL RUNNING OF THE VESSELS.)
- D. WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MEDICAL CARE AND PROVIDE DRUGS AND MEDICINES?
- E. WHO WILL PROVIDE FOOD AND DRINKING WATER FOR THE REFUGEES?

3. PAPER CONTINUES: "AS FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS NOT IN THE POSITION TO TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES ON THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SPOT THROUGH ITS OWN RESOURCES, ASSISTANCE BY THE SHIPS IS DEPENDENT UPON ALL NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS BEING MET FROM THE US SIDE. THIS APPLIES IN PARTICULAR TO SECURITY FORCES AT TIME OF EMBARKATION AND DEBARKATION AND ALSO ON BOARD DURING THE EVACUATION VOYAGE."

4. FONMIN OFFICIALS TELL US THEIR PLANNING

CONTINUING, DESPITE UNCERTAINTY OF SITUATION AS
INDICATED BY PRESS AND TELEGRAMS FROM FRG POSTS
ABROAD ON ASSUMPTION THAT SHIPS MAY STILL BE NEEDED
FOR EVACUATION ACTION AT SOME PLACE ALONG SVN COAST.
BECAUSE FRG SIMPLY DOES NOT HAVE INFRASTRUCTURE IN
VIETNAM FOR PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SUPPORT AND SECURITY
SERVICES, IT MUST AS A PRACTICAL MATTER RELY ON US
INFRASTRUCTURE. FONMIN REQUESTS EARLIEST POSSIBLE
ANSWERS TO FOREGOING QUESTIONS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: URGENT GUIDANCE FOR RESPONDING
TO FRG REQUEST.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INSTRUCTIONS, EMERGENCY EVACUATION, SHIPS, EMERGENCY PLANNING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN05141
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750111-0287
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975033/aaaaacax.tel
Line Count: 128
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 HONG KONG 3331, 75 (NOTABONN 5139
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <07 OCT 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EVACUATION OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES
TAGS: AEMR, PINT, VS, GE
To: STATE SAIGON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006